

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

OMB-01 RSR-01 /086 W

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R 162323 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9444

C O N F I D E N T I A L GUATEMALA 1800

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT

SUBJECT: REVOLUTIONARY PARTY CONVENTION

REF: GUATEMALA 1688 AND GUATEMALA A-078 OF 4-13-73

SUMMARY: APRIL 14 PR PRESIDENTIAL NOMINATING CONVENTION HELD IN TUMULTUOUS AND CONFUSED CLIMATE WITH BOTH SECRETARY GENERAL SAGASTUME PEREZ AND COL. ARRIAGA BOSQUE CLAIMING VICTORY, WHILE PR'S PRESTIGE HAS DECLINED FURTHER. END SUMMARY

1. PR CONVENTION WHICH TOOK PLACE IN ATMOSPHERE OF UPROAR AND CONFUSION ON APRIL 14 RESULTED IN BOTH LEADING CANDIDATES, SAGASTUME PEREZ, AND COL. ARRIAGA BOSQUE CLAIMING VICTORY. SAGASTUME HAD PREVIOUSLY MANEUVERED TO GET CONTROL OF CONVENTION'S ORGANIZING APPARATUS WITH ASSISTANCE OF GOG CONTROLLED ELECTORAL TRIBUNAL AND THEN HAD COMMITTEE DECIDE VOTES CONTESTED BETWEEN HIMSELF AND ARRIAGA IN HIS FAVOR, THUS ENSURING HIS VICTORY.

2. SAGASTUME ARRIVED AT CONVENTION AT ABOUT 10:30 AMIDST TUMULTUOUS SHOUTING AMONG HIS SUPPORTERS. CONFUSION INTENSIFIED AT 10:45 WHEN COL. ARRIAGA ARRIVED ON SCENE AND HIS SUPPORTERS GAVE HIM NOISY WELCOME. AMID CONFUSION, SAGASTUME HAD ORGANIZING COMMITTEE ANNOUNCE HE HAD WON, RAISED HIS ARMS IN TRADITIONAL VICTORY SALUTE, PROMPTLY ADJOUNED THE CONVENTION, AND LEFT THE HALL AT ABOUT  
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11:00 A. M. ACCOMPANIED BY THE CATCALLS OF HIS OPPONENTS.

3. ON SAGASTUME'S DEPARTURE ARRIAGA BOSQUE AND MESA LIMPIA LEADER FUENTES MOHR JOINED FORCES TO SIEZE CONTROL OF CONVENTION. AFTER THEY TOOK TURNS ATTACKING SAGASTUME, A SECOND VOTE WAS HELD IN WHICH ARRIAGA, USING MANY OF THE VOTES THE ORGANIZING COMMISSION HAD DECLARED NULL AND VOID, WAS PROCLAIMED THE VICTOR. RUMP SESSION THEN VOTED TO OUST SAGASTUME AS SECRETARY GENERAL AND REPLACE HIM WITH PRO- ARRIAGA SECRETARY OF ORGANIZATION EDMUNDO GUERRERO.

4. ALTHOUGH SAGASTUME CAN BY NO OBJECTIVE STANDARD CLAIM TO HAVE BEEN FREELY ELECTED BY A DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION, HE IS NEVERTHELESS MAKING THE CLAIM. WITH THE GOG'S HELP, HE WILL PROBABLY BE ABLE TO MAKE HIS ELECTION STICK ALTHOUGH IN THIS CONFUSED SITUATION NOTHING IS CERTAIN. ONE THING FAIRLY SURE, HOWEVER, IS THAT THE PRESTIGE OF THE PR HAS SUFFERED TREMENDOUSLY.

5. SINCE THE CONVENTION SAGASTUME HAS FIRMLY, IF UN-CONVINCINGLY DENIED CHARGES THAT HE HAS SOLD OUT TO THE GOG, AND HAS CALLED FOR A UNITY OF THE LEFT, WHICH HE SAYS HE WILL LEAD TO THE PRESIDENCY. THE GOVERNMENT CERTAINLY DOES NOT THINK HE CAN OR WILL DO IT, AND AT THIS POINT NEITHER DO WE. BUT WE ARE NOT READY TO DISCOUNT THE PROBABILITY THAT SAGASTUME THINKS HE CAN DO IT.  
BOWDLER

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\*\*\* Current Handling Restrictions \*\*\* n/a

\*\*\* Current Classification \*\*\* CONFIDENTIAL

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